



Instructing for **INCLUSION**

ALAINA MAE FINDS HER VOICE IN YELLOWSTONE



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In many ways, 2018 has called our attention to the challenges girls face in pursuing education or careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). This year, EPI's STEM4Good campaign has focused on solutions to common barriers for girls in STEM fields, in particular:

- *Building self-confidence,*
- *Addressing stereotypes and implicit bias from teachers and peers, and*
- *Increasing visible role models in STEM-related fields.*

*The response from you, our supporters, has been tremendous! We are excited to share with you **two of the ways** in which EPI has incorporated these solutions into our programs. Thank you for helping us proactively encourage girls and inspire their interest in science!*

1. CREATING A SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Alaina Mae was the only girl on her 2018 Yellowstone course. By the end of the first day, many of the boys were responding eagerly to the lead instructor, but Alaina Mae remained relatively reserved. Throughout the course the instructor team used humor and encouragement to build each student's confidence and find ways to recognize and illuminate Alaina Mae's strengths. By the final day she confidently presented her independent research project and joined the group to tell stories around the fire. "I'm usually a really shy person," she explained. "I wasn't talking much at the beginning, but as the days progressed, I became a more talkative person."

2. INCLUSIVITY TRAINING FOR INSTRUCTORS

To provide students like Alaina Mae with a learning environment in which to thrive, EPI piloted an Inclusive Instructing workshop for course instructors in Yellowstone. The training focused on gender and other identities that can affect how people interact on an EPI course. Instructors honed in on ways to address implicit bias, stereotype threat, and non-inclusive language. For example, they found substitutes for commonly used words like "lame" or "guys," and ways to diffuse "hot moments" when participants' backgrounds or beliefs can cause friction. The Inclusive Instructing workshop will be an integral component of Yellowstone instructor training in the future, and we will explore ways to share it with other EPI program sites and our communities.

Meet Olivia.

STUDENT. SCIENTIST. RESEARCHER. CAMPER.

Olivia was part of an all-girls course in Yellowstone National Park. Her story illustrates how EPI's hands-on field experiences have the power to inspire young women and connect them to scientific discovery.

Just months ago, Olivia was a high school senior participating in her first EPI course in Yellowstone National Park. Now a college freshman, she credits her decision to major in marine science to that hands-on immersion in Yellowstone. Olivia pursued the program with the hope that a first-hand experience would help her decide on a future career and give her a sense of what it would be like to be a field researcher.

Like the other nine girls on her course, Olivia had never been camping. She found it empowering to share this outdoor initiation with other women, including EPI's three female instructors. With more than 60% of our participants, instructors, and global staff being female, EPI is powerfully positioned to be a force for young women in science-related fields, and this course was no exception.

The nine days were teeming with access to positive female role models. Olivia spotted her first wild wolf while standing shoulder-to-shoulder with biologist and wolf expert, Lizzie Cato. The group discussed famous female scientists, listened to female-driven science podcasts and instructors, and partners shared first-hand accounts of life as a woman in STEM. Those conversations bolstered Olivia's confidence and enthusiasm about the potential of a future in science.

And then there was the research. Olivia's favorite course activity involved employing radio telemetry to locate collared bison for the Hayden Valley grazing study. Knowing that the information would influence the park's ungulate management strategies made the research tangible and helped put the scientific process into perspective. Reflecting on her time in Yellowstone, Olivia said, "I never really 'got' science until I was able to actually do it!"

The opportunity to witness women excelling in field research and explore a budding passion in a safe, inclusive environment solidified Olivia's ability to see herself in a STEM career. She was able to learn by doing and discovered that she is capable of following her dreams, and maybe even conquer camp life.

Thank you for providing life-changing access to female role models and experiential science opportunities in natural environments. We count on your support to continue impacting the lives of hundreds of young women each year.



TOP 4 DRIVERS FOR SUSTAINING GIRLS' INTEREST IN STEM:

- Connect girls with female teachers
- Celebrate female role models
- Provide practical experiences and show the real-life connections
- Foster confidence in STEM subjects

FINDING WILDLIFE AND FEMALE MENTORS WITH EPI



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IN THEIR OWN WORDS

More than 1000 girls from across the U.S. and Latin America joined an EPI field course in 2018. We asked some of them to share how they were impacted by their experience. Here's what they had to say.

It's not too late to donate to STEM4Good and empower girls with EPI!

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